ROTHBURY

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

December 31st, 1897.

ROTHBURY, JANUARY 22ND, 1898.

TO THE ROTHBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

Allow me to present to you, this my second report, to to your Rural District, and my twenty-first to the Sanitary Authority. During the year 1897, there were registered 112 births, of which 65 were males, and 47 females, being 19 less than last year. This is at a rate of 23·0 per 1000 per annum as against our average of 25, while that for England and Wales is 30. There were registered during the first quarter, 32; the second, 21; the third, 28; and the last, 31. In Longframlington, the rate was equal to 30 per 1000, Rothbury and Whittingham each 22·0.

The deaths were only 56 in number, and 3 of them were strangers, coming into the District with their fatal illnesses upon them. Excluding these, there were only 53, which is at the very low rate of only 9·0 per 1000, and is most satisfactory, our average being, 16·0; and that for England and Wales, 19. It is thus less than one half of the latter. Of these 53, 25 were males, and 28 females; and the number occurring during each month were as follows:—December of previous year, 2; January 1897, 3; February, 4; March, 7; April, 5; May, 5; June, 1; July, 2; August, 10; September, 5; October, 4; November, 1; December, 4.

There being 112 births, and 53 deaths, it follows that the difference of 59 was naturally added to the population. This being at a rate of 12·0 per 1000, as against our average of 9·0; that for England and Wales, being 12·0 also.

Of the 112 births, it appears that 14 died while under 1 year of age, hence in infancy, amounting to a rate of 125 per 1000, being rather excessive, England and Wales being 120.

In the epidemic (or *zymotic*) class of disease, there were only 3 deaths, of which 2 were due to diphtheria, and one to whooping cough. This is at the very low rate of only 0·91, as against the average of 1·85, and that for England and Wales of 2·1. These will be again referred to.

The chief causes of the other deaths, were as follows: —Consumption (Phthisis) 5, as against the average of 14; Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy 8, as against 11. Heart Disease 7 (average 11); Injuries caused 3 deaths. Other causes were 30, and these include Senile Decay 8, Cancer 4 (average 4·5); Apoplexy 1; Debility from birth 1;

The periods of life at which these occurred, were as follows:—Under 1 year, 14; 1 and under 5, 6; 5 and under 15, 2; 15 and under 25, 2; 25 and under 65, 12; above that, 18; and of these latter, one being aged 99, was in her 100th year (at Newtown), 4 others were over 80 years of age, and 9 others over 70.

The following table gives tne number dying in each district of the Union, with the rate per 1000, calculated upon its population.

Alnham,	2.—10·0.	Longframlington,	5.—10·0.
Alwinton,	7.— 7·0	Longhorsley,	2.—20·0.
Brinkburn,	1.— 6·0.	Netherwitton,	4.—23·53.
Cambo,	2.—11·0.	Rothbury,	19.—14·51.
Elsdon,	4.—11·0.	Whittingham,	10.—11·77.

Thus for an exception, Netherwitton and Longhorsley head the black list, Rothbury next with only 15·41; while Brinkburn is now reduced to only 6·0, from 25 and 31·0 the two preceding years, the highest to the lowest. Surely this says something for the effects produced by the Sanitary improvements effected in it, during the year. The same results occurred in Whittingham, from 19·5 to now only 11.77, after great improvements.

INJURIES were answerable for 3 of the deaths, viz., a child from burns at Ewesley Cottages, A male, aged 26, belonging Cartington, killed in the lamentable railway accident at Rothbury Station; and a male aged 70 accidentally killed on the railway line.

INQUESTS were held by the Coroner on each of these, and enquiries relating to the 3 strangers who came into the district, with their fatal illnesses upon them, viz., an infant aged 3 months who died at Crosshill; a male from Meldon, who died from heart disease and shock at Rothley Shield; and a lad aged 18, belonging Newcastle, who died at Swindon from heart disease.

SCARLET FEVER was conveyed from the Raw out-break at end of last year, to the Whisker Shield; 2 under 5 years of age were attacked, but recovered. Isolation and disinfection were adopted, and it did not spread. There were no unsanitary conditions.

DIPHTHERIA broke out at the Raw Cottages, on March 28th, in a little girl aged 8 years, who died after 11 days illness. On April 22nd, another aged 4 years died of the same. The father also took it but recovered. On visiting the place, I ordered isolation and disinfection, and it did not spread. An unsanitary drainage was rectified, and proper privy and ash-midden provided. The house was damp, and is now spouted.

Another out-break occurred in a child aged 8, at Whitton. The disused foul open drain, which may have caused it, is now filled in. There is very great need of more privy and ash-midden accommodation, as there is only one for 5 cottages, inhabited by 30 persons, and it is a foul nuisance, owing to the privy roof draining into open ash-midden.

MEASLES broke out in the Hepple district, on February 10th. It was imported from the Otterburn district, and necessitated the closing of the schools for 6 weeks. It did not spread any further after that. There were in all, 1 below, and 2 above 5 years of age affected. Isolation and disinfection were advised. None proved fatal.

It was also conveyed to Low Weldon from Morpeth on February 22; and from here, owing to a call to High Weldon, where it ended, on March 19th. There were in

all 7 cases, 2 being below, and 5 above 5 years of age. All recovered. The house at Low Weldon was very damp; it was now drained round and cemented. The ash-midden is unsatisfactory. Isolation and disinfection were used.

Early in May, it broke out at Harbottle Castle, where two adults were affected. Isolation and disinfection were used.

It broke out in the Rothley School district in May. No doubt it was carried to the school, and thence spread. This was closed for 3 weeks and it ceased. The usual steps were taken, and school cleansed and disinfected; 5 in all were affected. Unsanitary conditions were pointed out at the Ralph Shield still existing.

Whooping Cough in mostly a mild type broke out in the Ewesley and Rothley districts in August. It caused the death of an infant at Cold Park.

Erysipelas occurred in a male at High Trewhitt in October. It was a mild attack.

Chicken Pox broke out in November in thee Hpple district.

Influenza at intervals occurred throughout the year, more notably in children. None proved fatal.

Diarrhœa was all but absent, as also Rheumatic fever.

There were no cases of overcrowding. The 5 following cases were tried before the Magistrates, at which I attended and gave evidence with your Inspector:—(1) Unsanitary conditions at High Trewhitt ordered to be rectified and put right; (2) Against Mr Swarbeck for Netherton Buildings, and (3) Alwinton Cottages, unsanitary conditions, cases failed; (4) Lonfgramlington, Thompson's property, sustained, and ordered to be rectified, this was done; (5) Same place, Richardson's ordered to be put into proper sanitary condition. Since changed ownership, and now untenanted.

The Peels Cottages as well as Low Farnham, are still in an unsanitary condition. At Thropton ashes and house refuse are still deposited on the banks of the river (Wreigh). There is need of a proper depot for this district. At Holystone (Davison's) drainage has been

rectified, and proper ash-midden provided. Glanton Sewage—the overflow still runs down the roadside. Pauperhaugh—the drainage into the roadside gutter causes a foul nuisance, Mr. Robinson's water supply at Framlington Villa was inspected by me, and found quite unsatisfactory. At Greenleighton the same has been improved. Netherton Village has been shown to be in much need of a proper sewerage. A valuable scheme was prepared by your Inspector, and approved by the Sanitation Committee, but postponed by the full meeting of Board. J. Gladstone's house at Longframlington specially inspected, and found unfit to occupy. Part of roof has been mended.

I accompanied the County Medical Officer of Health, with your Inspector, in his inspection of Netherton Buildings, and Alwinton Cottages, he fully confirming our previous reports of unsanitary conditions, and pointing out the same.

Also accompanying the Sanitation Committee, in the inspection of the following places :—Netherton Buildings, Netherton (sewerage), Alwinton, Barrow, Barrow Mill, all being in unsanitary conditions, but the last 2 and Flotterton Cottages (7), especially so, having no sanitary arrangements at all, being much needed. Wood hall Cottage the same, the farm house needing ash-midden and drain. Harbottle School house needs proper ash-midden and privy. The Sanitation Committee sent in their recommendations thereon, which were directed to be sent to the owners, asking them to comply therewith. Netherton drainage was withdrawn for present.

Accompanied by your Inspector, I may special inspection of :—(1) Brinkburn district, since which a good deal of improvement has been effected, but a good deal is still needed. Healy Cote needs proper sinks and drainage, with ash-midden and better accommodation. Jackson's style and the Cockshott both need the ash-middens covered in. Brinkburn Works—proper drainage. (2) Longframlington—since which Richardson's drainage has been rectified. Four privies and ash-middens have been provided, but still needing 3 ash-middens, and 2 privies. (3) Wingates—the drainage afterwards has been much improved. Sinks and sanitary drains provided where needed. 3 Ash-middens and 3 privies are still required.

Besides attending to all the above, your Inspector reports that during the year he has served 83 informal; notices, 67 legal notices, and 93 nuisances have been abated which caused foul conditions—structural defects, ash-pits and privies, animals improperly kept, cowsheds, pig-sties, deposits of manure, drainage, defective traps and spouting, water supply, and houses unfit for human inhabitation. He has also extended the piping, and more than doubled the water supply and pressure to the village of Thropton, providing a storage tank for more than 2 days supply. He has also submitted an excellent plan for the much needed drainage of Netherton village. He has conducted 5 prosecutions for structural defects, and obtained 3 convictions.

I am again indebted to Mr Bertram of Cragside for the following valuable table of rainfall.

Month.	Inches.
January	3·59
February	1·55
March	4·87
April	2·23
May	1·21
June	2·53
July	2·42
August	2·36
September	3·86
October	1·86
November	2·91
December	2·69
Total ...	32·08 Inches.

Our average is 34·0 inches, there were thus 2 inches less. The number of wet days was 190; and hours of bright sunshine 1405.

Your obedient servant,

F. BARROW,

Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1897, IN THE ROTHBURY RURAL DISTRICT, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO DISEASES, AGES, AND LOCALITIES.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all causes, at subjoined Ages.								Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing deaths of Children under Five Years of Age.							
	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwd's.		Diph-theria.	Whop. Cough.	Pht'isis	Bronc's Pne'mo and Pleu'sy	Heart Disease	Injuries	All other Dise'ses	Total.
Alnham	2	..	..	1	..	..	1	Under 5								
								5 upwds.					1		1	2
Alnwinton	7	2	..	..	..	1	4	Under 5			1				2	2
								5 upwds.				1			3	5
Brinkburn	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	Under 5							1	1
								5 upwds.								
Cambo (part)	2	..	..	..	..	1	1	Under 5								
								5 upwds.					1		1	2
Elsdon	4	1	1	..	..	..	2	Under 5				1			1	2
								5 upwds.							2	2
Lonframlington	5	1	..	..	1	..	3	Under 5				1				1
								5 upwds.			1				3	4
Longhorsley (part)	2	..	..	..	1	1	..	Under 5								
								5 upwds.							2	2
Netherwitton (part)	4	2	1	..	..	1	..	Under 5		1				1	1	3
								5 upwds.							1	1
Rothbury	19	2	3	1	2	5	6	Under 5	1		1	3				5
								5 upwds.	1		1	1	4	2	5	14
Whittingham	10	6	..	..	..	3	1	Under 5				1			5	4
								5 upwds.			1		1		2	6
Totals	56	14	6	2	4	12	18	Under 5	1	1	1	6		1	10	20
								5 upwds.	1		4	2	7	2	20	36
The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.																
Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto.	3	1			1	1		Under 5					2		1	1
								5 upwds.								2

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1896, in the Rothbury Rural District; classified according to Diseases, Ages and Localities.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New cases of sickness in each locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.			
	Last Census	Estimated to middle of 1897.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Erysipelas	Measles.
Alnham	205	200	3	Under 5 5 upwds.				
Alwinton	1034	1000	19	Under 5 5 upwds.				2
Brinkburn	160	160	4	Under 5 5 upwds.				2 5
Cambo (part)	191	180	3	Under 5 5 upwds.				6
Elsdon	331	330	8	Under 5 5 upwds.	2			
Longframlington	450	500	16	Under 5 5 upwds.				
Longhorsley (part)	110	100	4	Under 5 5 upwds.				
Netherwitton (part)	172	170	7	Under 5 5 upwds.				
Rothbury	1358	1300	29	Under 5 5 upwds.		1 3	1	2 16
Whittingham	879	850	19	Under 5 5 upwds.				
Totals ..	4880	4790	112	Under 5 5 upwds.	2	1 3	1	4 28